

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING – 16 OCTOBER 2008

**CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT – ADOPTION OF CONSERVATION
AREAS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Report by: Mark Stephenson, Building Conservation Officer

Summary:

This report presents the results of the draft Conservation Areas Management Plan consultation with stakeholders as authorised by the Authority at its meeting on the 22 May 2008. The report seeks the formal adoption of the Conservation Areas Management Plan.

Recommendation:

That the Conservation Areas Management Plan is adopted.

Resources and Corporate Plan:

Corporate Plan Objective C7: Support high quality building and open space design in village and town centres, reflecting the distinctive character of the built environment

Papers:

NFNPA 269/08:	Cover paper
NFNPA 269/08 Annex 1:	NFNPA 253/08 Conservation Area Management Proposals cover paper
NFNPA 269/08 Annex 2:	Conservation Areas Management Plan
NFNPA 269/08 Annex 3:	Consultation response analysis

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1 Background

- 1.1 A conservation area is defined in Section 69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an “area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.
- 1.2 A review of conservation area designations in the National Park began in 2007 and continues in parallel with these proposals. This has resulted in the designation of four new conservation areas. There are now 18 conservation areas in the National Park. The review moves on to look at the appropriateness of the boundaries of the existing conservation areas inherited by the National Park Authority.
- 1.3 Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on a local planning authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas.
- 1.4 In pursuance of its responsibilities under both national park purposes and through the duty imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, the Authority is developing a framework for the management of conservation areas in New Forest National Park (Corporate Plan Objective C7).
- 1.5 A three part conservation area management framework has been developed:
 - **Conservation area character appraisals**, one for each conservation area, which identifies the special historic and architectural qualities of an area which justify its designation
 - **Conservation Areas Management Plan**, covering all conservation areas

- **Conservation area specific management plan** covering individual conservation areas.

2 Conservation Areas Management Plan

- 2.1 The Conservation Areas Management Plan, applies across all of the conservation areas in the National Park. Placing all this material in one document avoids repetition that would occur if the same information were included in management proposals for each conservation area.
- 2.2 The plan comprises a number of core principles for the management of conservation areas and collaboration with stakeholders. These are broad based as more detailed objectives will be developed in the conservation area specific management plans. The plan has a set of objectives which will facilitate management of conservation areas.
- 2.3 Collaboration with stakeholders is particularly important as, whilst the Authority is the local planning authority, its role as a manager of conservation areas is limited ie. it is not a landowner and has no remit for carrying out or maintaining physical works.

3 Conservation Areas Management Plan consultation

- 3.1 Consultation with a range of stakeholders on the draft Management Plan was authorised at the Authority meeting of the 22 May 2008, a copy of the cover paper of that report is attached in **Annex 1**. That consultation has now taken place.
- 3.2 Public consultation on matters relating to individual conservation areas will take place at the time of production of individual conservation area annexes.

4 Consultation responses

- 4.1 An analysis of responses is set out in **Annex 3**. A summary is provided below.

Questionnaires

- 4.2 Five questionnaires were returned. Three from local parish councils, one from the Caravan Club, one from the Ramblers Association and one representing both the Institute of Chartered Foresters and Royal Forestry Society.

Parish Councils

- 4.3 Three parish councils responded. All three were broadly supportive of the Conservation Areas Management Plan with no amendments to the plan being sought.

Caravan Club

- 4.4 The Caravan Club were broadly supportive, though highlighting a number of concerns relating to potential economic and development issues. The Management Plan however is not designed to restrict or prevent development nor restrict economic growth. It is however intended to manage how these occur in order to conserve the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Institute of Chartered Foresters and Royal Forestry Society

- 4.5 These organisations expressed support for good conservation area management. They wished to emphasise the contribution that traditional forestry practices have had and should continue to have upon the character of the New Forest as a whole. They felt that the management plan over emphasised the preservation of buildings per se rather than the building in its setting. The Conservation Areas Management Plan is slightly orientated more to the architectural elements of conservation as this is the primary focus of conservation area status and the backing legislation. However, the Plan does seek to address the issue of the settings of individual buildings and the setting of building groups with particular reference to the effective management of open space including the open forest where appropriate.

Letters

One letter was received.

National Farmers Union

- 4.6 The National Farmers Union expressed the potential for conflict between effective and economic farm management and the aims of conservation area management. They have specific concerns over provision of more appropriate and functional buildings to address more modern farming practices and the potential for reuse of redundant agricultural buildings of value to the locality. These issues are more appropriately addressed within the normal planning process and specific policies do apply to both these concerns. The Conservation Areas Management Plan will not redress these existing policies but may influence how they are implemented. It is not the purpose of the plan to prevent development of this kind where standard planning policy permits the principle, but is intended to ensure that such development respects the character and appearance of its locality with conservation area boundaries.

5 Changes as a result of consultation responses

5.1 The draft Conservation Areas Management Plan has been amended in the light of the comments received as set out below, (See **Annex 2**).

5.2. A further Core Principle has been added within Section 3.2 General of the core principles at point 3.2.9:

“Vegetation management, in the widest sense should reflect ecological imperatives and aim to work with nature.”

5.3 The Core Principle within Section 3.2 General at point 3.2.8 has been amended as identified in bold below:

"Historic spaces and important views should be preserved, for example, views along streets, views taking in old buildings, boundary features and mature, **especially veteran**, trees. Green spaces within conservation areas should be protected as should important spaces between buildings”

6 The next stage

6.1 The Conservation Areas Management Plan will be printed, published and distributed to stakeholders.

6.2 The programme of work for conservation area management will continue with the preparation of conservation area specific management plans to be completed for all conservation areas by December 2013.

7 Conclusions

7.1 The responses received to this consultation are generally supportive of the draft Conservation Areas Management Plan. As planned, and as is clear from the responses, there will be much more opportunity to work with stakeholders including local residents in the development of conservation specific management plans. These will work within the core principles set out in the conservation areas management plan, develop the use of management tools and develop opportunities for improvement and enhancement.

8 Recommendation

That the Conservation Areas Management Plan is adopted.